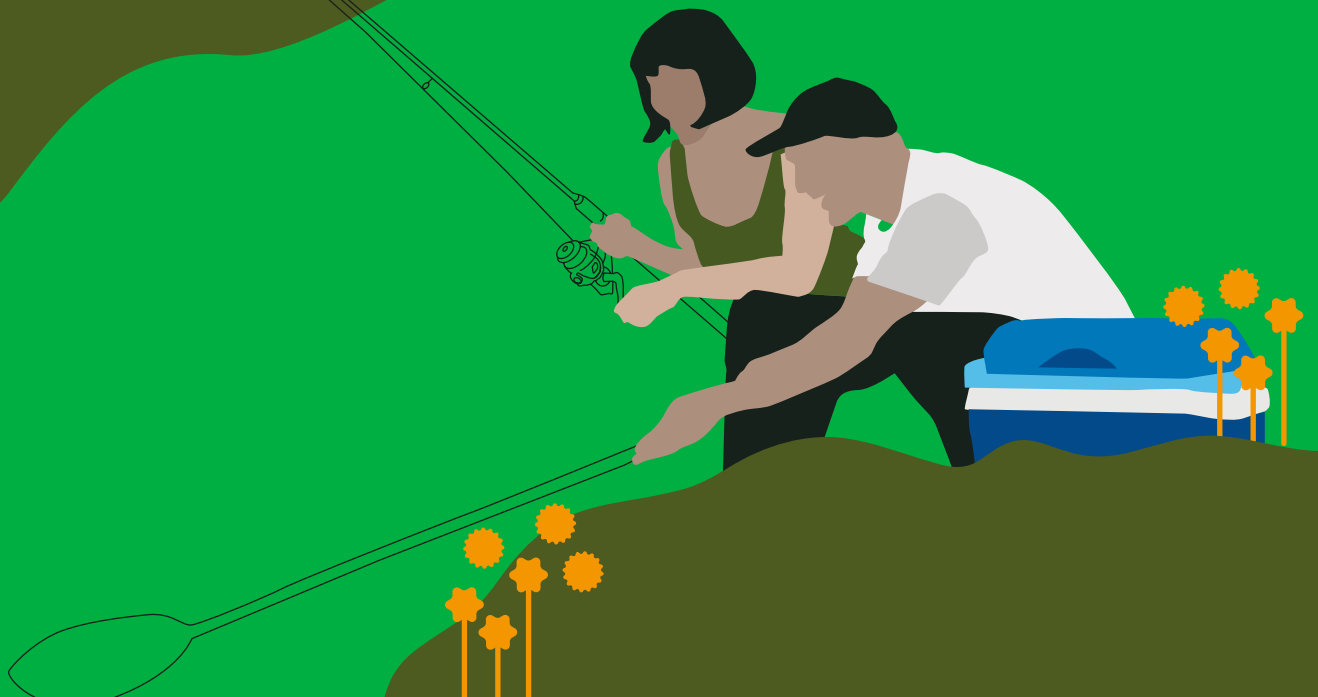


FISHERIES ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

# How we spend fishing licence income



2023-24

# Income from fishing licence sales goes right back into supporting angling and fisheries across England

- ✔ Stocking fish
- ✔ Safeguarding fisheries and tackling illegal fishing
- ✔ Enhancing habitats
- ✔ Collaborating with partners
- ✔ Focusing on sustainability and building a brighter future for our fisheries



478,937

- ✔ Coarse fish supplied and stocked



500+

- ✔ Project partners



421

- ✔ Successful prosecutions for fishing licence evasion



1,933

- ✔ Fish stock surveys



**419**

✔ Incidents at fisheries responded to



**392ha**

✔ Of stillwater fisheries enhanced



**43,224**

✔ People introduced to fishing



**406km**

✔ Of river habitats enhanced and **219km** protected



**46,126**

✔ Fishing licence checks



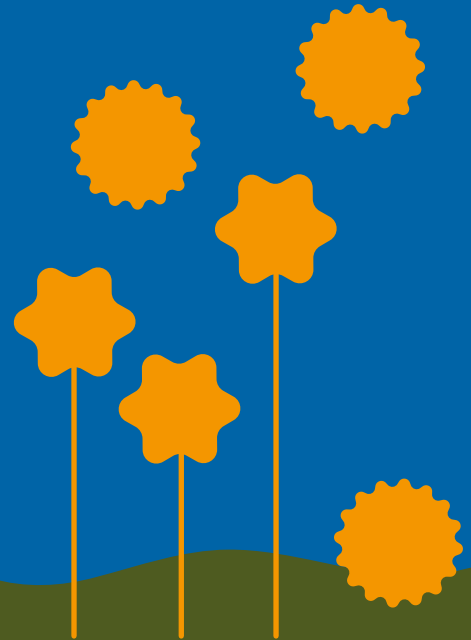
**£22.5 million**

✔ Of fishing licence income reinvested to deliver the fisheries service



WORK ACHIEVED

# How we put your fishing licence fees to work



**“I remember catching my very first fish on the canal with my dad. That was a moment I will never forget.”** – Carly, Angler

“

When you buy a fishing licence, you're investing in the future of the sport you love.”



We're proud that the money raised from fishing licence sales goes right back into angling. Between 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 we sold **910,973** fishing licences in England, bringing in over **£22,500,000**. This income was reinvested to enhance fisheries, support the environment and promote the sport of angling.

[LEARN MORE](#)

[i See all our reports](#)

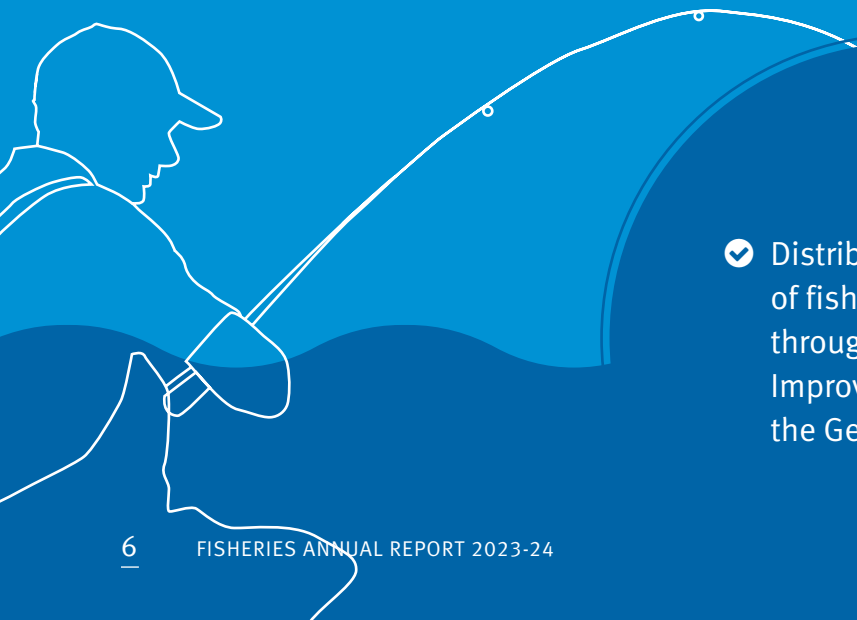
Your fishing licence fee directly supports angling and fisheries across England, helping us to:

- ✓ Enhance fishery habitats
- ✓ Boost fish stocks and improve fisheries
- ✓ Safeguard fisheries and combat illegal fishing
- ✓ Ensure a sustainable future for fisheries
- ✓ Work with partners to achieve even more
- ✓ Provide more safe places to fish

# Boosting participation in fishing and enhancing fishery habitats is possible because we work in partnership with likeminded groups and organisations

## Our partners helped us to:

- ✔ Introduce 43,224 new people to angling
- ✔ Carry out 4,698 riverfly surveys
- ✔ Facilitate 116 visits and workshops to improve trout fisheries
- ✔ Provide 550 biosecurity requests and respond to 986 requests for advice on managing predation
- ✔ Distribute over £425,000 of fishing licence income through the Angling Improvement Fund and the Get Fishing Fund



“

## Partnerships mean we can do more!”

In 2023-24 we teamed up with over **500** partners. By combining our resources with other organisations, we were able to make an even greater impact.

Some of the groups we collaborated with included The Angling Trust, Wild Trout Trust, Institute of Fisheries Management, the Riverfly Partnership, local river trusts, angling clubs, charities, and many more.

These partnerships allowed us to provide anglers with:

- ✔ Improved and healthier fish stocks and habitats
- ✔ New facilities and greater accessibility at fisheries
- ✔ Participation events and campaigns that introduced more people to angling
- ✔ Coordinated enforcement efforts and intelligence sharing

### LEARN MORE

- 📘 [See more on partnerships](#)



**Institute of Fisheries Management**



**GET HOOKED ON FISHING**



**Canal & River Trust**

Making life better by water



**WILD TROUT TRUST**



**The Rivers Trust**

# Angling Trust

“

**Fishing – it’s like a switch.  
You can pull up, get the gear  
out and then all of a sudden  
nothing else matters.”**

– Simon, Angler

We’re passionate about getting more people to fish and the Angling Trust is a key partner in making that happen by introducing new anglers to the sport, or helping others rediscover their love for it.

**43,224**

introduced to fishing

**3,646**

completed the Get Fishing award scheme

**331**

licenced coaches trained

**113**

Get Fishing Grants awarded  
totalling £200,000



The Angling Trust also provides a vital role in enforcement and conservation.

- ✔ 986 otter/fish-eating bird issues and 550+ invasive species cases addressed
- ✔ 17,427 patrols conducted and 1,021 incidents reported by the Voluntary Bailiff Service (VBS)
- ✔ 51 Angling Improvement Fund projects to manage predation and invasive non-native species totalling £220,000





## PARTNERSHIPS IN FOCUS

# Wild Trout Trust (WTT)

With **£115,000** funding from us, they:

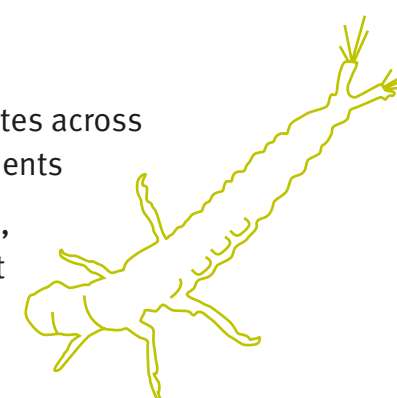
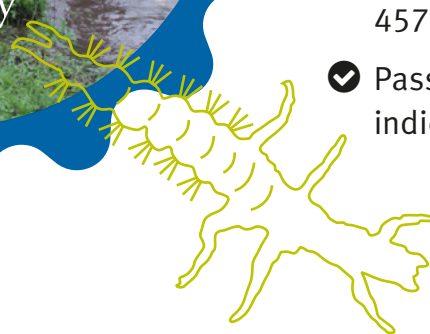
- ✔ Delivered 116 advisory visits and workshops
- ✔ Completed 11 river improvement projects
- ✔ Advice and projects enhanced 285km of river across England



# Riverfly Partnership

With **£59,000** funding, Riverfly Partnership trained volunteers undertook:

- ✔ 4,698 surveys
- ✔ Site monitoring at 1,075 sites across 457 rivers and 148 catchments
- ✔ Passed on 68 trigger alerts, indicating pollution impact



# Fishing has been improved in local communities across England thanks to an investment of **£1,175,000** that came directly from fishing licence income.

Fishing licence sales income has helped deliver 283 projects that support anglers and improve fishing environments.



“

Creating habitats where fish can spawn, feed and find shelter from predators gives anglers a better chance of catching them. Everyone wins when we invest in enhancing fisheries!”

Angling Improvement Fund projects focused on protecting fisheries.

- ✔ 33 otter and cormorant predation schemes
- ✔ 18 non-native species control and biosecurity projects



232 Fisheries Improvements Programme (FIP) projects.

- ✔ Improved 5.5km of river and 58 hectares of stillwater habitat
- ✔ Created 160 new angling facilities



LEARN MORE

- [i Learn more about improvement projects](#)

“

Anglers often ask us about how we spend the money raised from the sale of fishing licences. The Fisheries Improvements Programme (FIP) is a prime example of the wide range of activities this income pays for to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries and boost the popularity of angling.”

– Amir Fogel, Environment Agency  
Area Fisheries Team Leader



“

Since 2015, over **1,200** projects have been successfully completed, with a total of **£8 million** invested from fishing licence sales.”

### **Ferry Meadows Fishery, Gunwade Lake: predation management**

Fish populations are thriving after habitat changes and predation measures made it easier for them to hide from resident otters.

- ✔ Creation of enhanced habitat types, including floating rafts, submerged habitat reefs, marginal berms, and dedicated fish refuge zones.
- ✔ Marginal tree planting as well as tree hinging and pinning work has provided habitats that allow fish to seek refuge from predators.

### **Goose Green Fishery: habitat recovery**

Fish stocks have recovered and anglers now enjoy bigger catches after an equipment upgrade solved a recurring issue in three of the site's lakes.

- ✔ Historic pollution and excessive algae growth had been depleting oxygen and killing fish.
- ✔ Six aerators improved dissolved oxygen across the site.
- ✔ Algae blooms were controlled by the addition of barley straw, and planting regimes assisted in nutrient uptake.

### **Plough Pond: accessibility improvements**

Significant accessibility improvements have made it even easier for all anglers to safely enjoy a tranquil one-acre angling club spot pond.

- ✔ Installation of a new footbridge with a handrail and flat deck, suitable for mobility scooters and wheelchairs.
- ✔ Refurbishment of existing platforms, including safer, non-slip surfaces.



COARSE FISH STOCKING

We were able to stock our rivers and stillwaters with over 470,000 fish thanks to your fishing licence



Bream  
**51,494**

Dace  
**66,600**

Roach  
**88,724**

Tench  
**15,350**

Grayling  
**39,300**

Rudd  
**17,809**

Barbel  
**135,410**

Chub  
**47,450**

Crucian Carp  
**16,800**

“

Thanks to anglers like you,  
we released **478,937** fish into  
our rivers and stillwaters.”

We use fishing licence income to rear fish for release, enhancing your angling experience and ensuring we're prepared to replenish stocks after environmental incidents. This also helps kickstart recovery from longer-term issues like pollution.

LEARN MORE

**i** [See more on fish stocking](#)



# Your fishing licence helps fund a world-class fisheries laboratory



Conducted  
**112**  
fish mortality investigations



Responded to over  
**1,500**  
queries supporting national incidents



Investigated  
**36**  
fisheries for fish kills, including full disease diagnostics



Conducted  
**102**  
health checks, surveys, and lab investigations





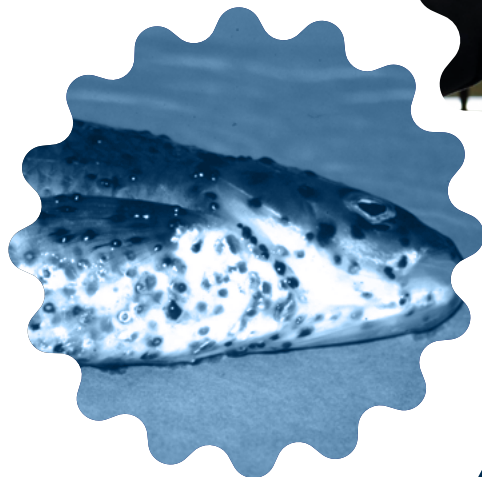
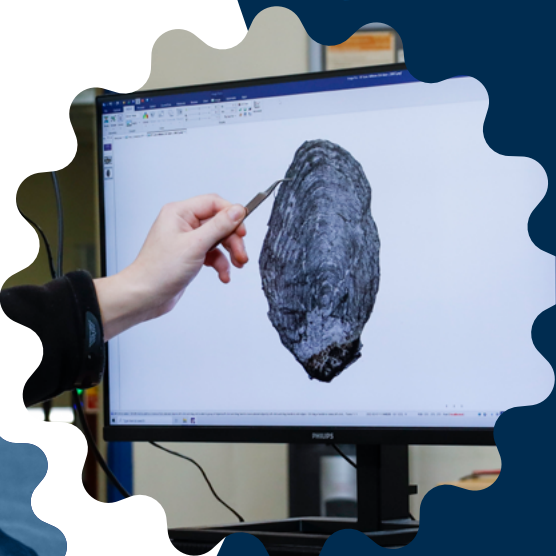
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**Fishing licence income helps support the National Fisheries Laboratory in Cambridgeshire.”**

By closely monitoring fish health, ageing, and non-native species, we're well-equipped to protect our fish and fisheries now and in the future.

LEARN MORE

**i** [Learn more about the National Fisheries Laboratory](#)



ENFORCEMENT

# When you buy a fishing licence you help us tackle unlicensed fishing and angling offences

✓ **46,126**  
fishing licence checks

✓ **£76,485**  
in penalties issued

✓ **421**  
court prosecutions

✓ **373**  
warning letters issued

✓ **186**  
joint patrols with the  
Voluntary Bailiff Service



Play your part!  
Report offences to  
**0800 80 70 60**

Unlicensed  
anglers face a  
fine of up to  
**£2,500**

Always hold a valid  
fishing licence

Buy a rod  
fishing licence



“

Protecting fisheries and preventing illegal fishing is crucial, so we work closely with the Angling Trust, police forces, and other enforcement agencies to make this happen.”

LEARN MORE

[i See more on enforcement](#)

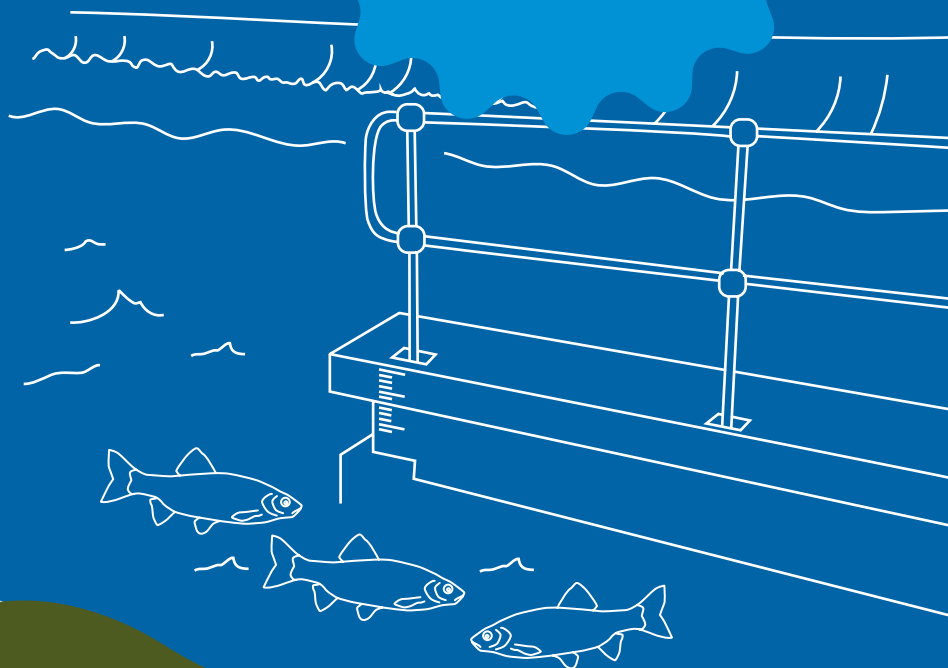


# Your fishing licence fee ensures we can respond quickly when an incident occurs



419

incidents responded to



“

**Effectively managing incidents is crucial to protecting our fisheries.”**

In 2023-24, warm weather and algae were responsible for over 50% of the incidents we attended. Thanks to your licence fee, we were able to respond to these and other issues like pollution, disease, and environmental events.



**Witnessed fish in distress, dead or dying? We can help.**

**Call our hotline on  
0800 80 70 60.**



## MONITORING

Monitoring is funded by fishing licence income because the knowledge it provides gives us the power to plan for the future



**1,933**  
fish stock surveys



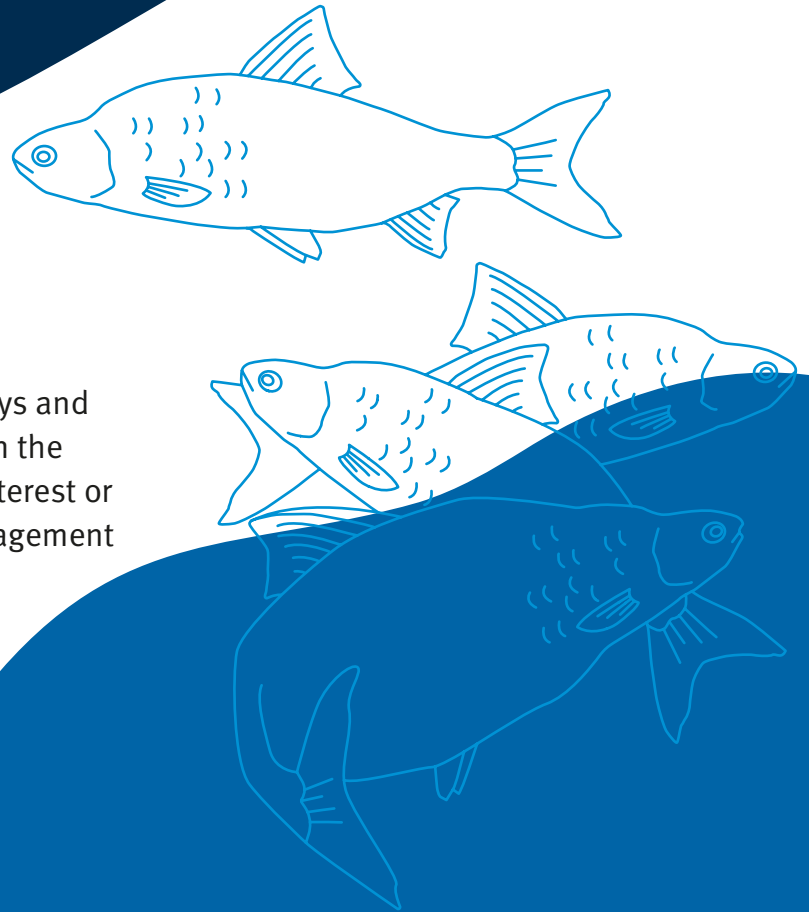
“

**We're able to make decisions about managing fisheries and planning improvements because we gather knowledge and understanding about where fish populations are migrating, breeding, thriving or struggling.”**

The regular and extensive fish stock surveys and water quality monitoring we undertake - on the rivers and stillwaters of greatest fishing interest or most at risk - help us make informed management decisions.

LEARN MORE

**i** [See more on monitoring](#)



## When you buy a fishing licence you are directly supporting the future of angling

Whether you are new to fishing or a lifelong angler, licence holders like you are making a huge difference to the sport. Thank you for playing a part in everything we have delivered this year:

- ✔ Stocking fish.
- ✔ Protecting fisheries and preventing illegal fishing.
- ✔ Improving fishery habitats.
- ✔ Working with partners.
- ✔ Prioritising a sustainable future for fisheries.

**Witnessed fish in distress, dead or dying? We can help.**

CALL OUR HOTLINE ON  
0800 80 70 60

## Have you gone paperless yet?

Why not consider switching to digital at your next renewal? It's convenient for you and better for the environment.

- ✔ Instant delivery via email or text.
- ✔ Helps us reach our 2030 net-zero carbon goal.
- ✔ We saved 14.6 tonnes of carbon emissions in 2023-2024.
- ✔ Reduces costs, allowing for more investment in fisheries

“

Once again, we thank all those that have bought a fishing licence in 2023/24. Without you, the fishing licence customer, we would be unable to achieve all the investment detailed in this report, which together helps us to protect and improve fishing and fisheries across England.

”

**Heidi Stone**  
Partnerships Manager, Nature Recovery,  
Environment Agency